# ELEAZAR & NAPHTALI

# ELEAZAR AND NAPHTALI,

## A Hebrew Tale.

WITH

*AN INTRODUCTORY PREFACE,*

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE ANCIENT AND PRESENT STATE OF THE HEBREWS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF M. FLORIAN.

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# ADVERTISEMENT.

*THE following picture of Fraternal Love in the first ages of the world may in this appear extravagant and improbable. But relatively considered as to the state of society then and now, the fiction may not appear to be wholly feigned. Society was in those days confined to fewer individuals, and each became more dear to the other, as the circle of connection was necessarily more contracted. Luxury had not, as in the present day, induced imaginary wants (with their concomitant vices of Envy, Pride, and low Ambition) nor the mean and sel-*

*fish arts by which they are now too often supplied—those little jealousies and emulations by which the nobler affections of our nature are now so often warped or absolutely subdued, were rarely excited in those days of simplicity and truth, when the heart unbiassed by the petty interests of vanity, was sensible to the impulse of affection, and neither fear nor shame imposed silence on the tongue that would declare it.*

*It was, probably, the object of the worthy author of this little performance, (it certainly is that of the translator) to reprove by contrast the artificial manners and pretensions too generally prevalent in these modern times; and to promote the unsophisticated influence of Nature in the human breast—but, be it understood,*

*with the necessary caution, that, in this age of artifice and insincerity, it become not the dupe of its own goodness.*

*The Introductory part of the volume is a valuable appendage to the work, as an accurate delineation of the ancient and present state of the Hebrews; a people whose history duly considered is astonishing—and in the circumstances of their existence during the last eighteen centuries, a standing miracle, and one of the strongest evidences of the truth of Christianity, and of the connection and consistency of the Two Testaments —a living and a lasting commentary on the prophecies—and a grand corroborating proof of God's providence in the moral order of the world.—Separated and dispersed through all the nations of the world, they amalgamate with none—a chosen and select people*

*they have always been, and seem so to remain: preserved as it were by an especial Providence, both in their exaltation and abasement, as a signal manifestation of divine power, and perhaps reserved for the final illustration of Heaven's inscrutable* arcana *in its multifarious scheme of Human destiny.*

*It has been the endeavour of the Translator to preserve the* spirit *of his author in the work he has humbly attempted—he will therefore be frequently found trespassing on his* letter *—though he flatters himself that he has not used this licence wantonly—but whatever be his success in the attempt, confident in the just judgment of a candid and impartial Public, he respectfully submits his little volume to its decisive* Verdict.

JANUARY 8, 1816.

# INTRODUCTION.

I WAS travelling some years ago, in the ancient seigniory of Avignon; when passing near the little town of L'Isle, I resolved to visit the Fountain of Vaucluse. As I was returning from that celebrated place, about the hour of ten in the morning, I perceived, sitting in the shade of a mulberry tree on the bank of the Sorgues, a young man and woman.

Their neat and simple habits indicated neither wealth nor indigence. The countenance of the young man was prepossessing, though not handsome—that of the young woman was dignified and beautiful—and what rendered its beauty more striking was, its foreign character. Her oval visage, and her fine black eyes, seemed to bear in them the impression of misfortune and dignity. I stopped to consider it. She was listening with much attention to the reading of a manuscript which the young man held on his knees. I drew nigh un-

perceived, and soon discovered that it was not French he read. They both seemed much interested—and sometimes stopped to speak to each other in the same language as that of the manuscript—pressing each other's hand, and looking affectionately—I even thought I observed their eyes filled with tears.

Although I did not understand a word they said, I should have listened a long time, if the young woman, perceiving me, had not made a sign to her companion to retire.—" It

is for me," said I, " to withdraw, since my presence is disagreeable to you.—I am a stranger returning from Vaucluse, and had missed my way, when seeing you engaged in reading (on this charming spot where probably Petrarch formerly read his verses to the beautiful Laura)—I took the liberty of approaching to ask of you my way to L'Isle."

The young woman blushed—her companion answered me in French—pointing to the path I should take. I asked him if he was returning to

L'Isle—he said, yes. I requested his permission to accompany him—he could not refuse me—and we set out together.

We had almost half a league to go, and I had time to form and to venture other questions. The young woman said nothing—she walked with down-cast eyes—having given her arm to the young man. He, more confident, seemed not averse to my conversation—I turned it on the manuscript which he had been reading.—"In what language is it?" said I.

"In mine," he replied: "I am a Hebrew."

"You are of a very ancient and celebrated nation—to which every Christian owes respect."

"We would dispense with their respect, if they would grant us but that toleration which humanity demands."

"I could wish it also; and for all men, of sincere faith, whatever, be their persuasion. I hope, that in my

country that happy period is not far distant—but; without intending to excuse the cruelties your people have suffered—with still less intention to outrage your nation—permit me to remind you, that it has been itself intolerant—that it has shed much blood, and that at each page of your history it is necessary to remind ourselves that it is *sacred* history, not to turn with doubt and horror from the massacres we every-where find recorded in it."

"I know not," replied the young

man, "whether your histories of Europe present pictures less revolting; but I can assure you, if you were acquainted with the histories of our neighbours the Syrians, the Phenicians, the Idumeans, you would find the massacres of our history fully equalled —God forbid, that I should thence pretend to extenuate the horror of them—I would only remark, that the numerous people of Asia, especially those nigh the burning deserts of the Red Sea, seem to have been greater exterminators than other people— but in the matter of barbarity—I

confess I know not which may bear the palm—In a comparison with our brethren the Arabs, the principal difference, perhaps, would be, that the details of their actions are less known than those of ours. Your philosophers, whom I otherwise respect, have dwelt too much on our cruelties—I know their motive—they have entertained less hatred against us, than spleen towards certain things, the origin of which they reproach us with—they strike at the Jews—to wound a more distant object—they have read them—they have said of them, that

their annals are stained with blood— but they have not had the justice to say, that in the same annals they have found the most affecting traits of justice and humanity."

"Yes" I replied, "your story of Joseph is a master-piece of morality, tenderness, and interest."

"Do you think that alone worthy of praise?" interrupted the young and beautiful Jewess, who had hitherto been silent. "I could wish, for a moment, to discuss with you the subject of

our books, as though they were not sacred.—Do you see no beauty in the detail of patriarchal manners so well described in Genesis?—Do you feel no interest in the perusal of Abraham's hospitality—the marriage of Rebecca —the meeting of Jacob and Rachel at the well—the seven years servitude to which he voluntarily submitted to obtain her whom he loved—and the other seven years which he recommenced to render himself more worthy of her?—The history of Job—of Ruth —of Jonathan—of Tobit—are all these destitute of interest? Do you

acknowledge no beauties of genius and eloquence in the songs of Moses—of Deborah—of David—of Solomon—in our Psalms—in our Prophets? Compare the Bible with the Alcoran, the Sadda, or the Zendavesta, the very reading of which is intolerable—and accede, at least, to the opinion of the fathers of your church—your writers—your most celebrated poets—who, notwithstanding their hatred to us, do us the honour to study—to admire—and often to imitate our books.

"'Without discussing their merit,

condescend but to the recollection of our laws.—Open the code—the only one, perhaps, that has been observed in continuity during the space of three thousand years—you will find in every page the precepts of humanity. I will not speak of the Decalogue—the most excellent and most ancient monument of universal morality—nor of our laws will I cite more than a few details less generally known.

"'Love, and protect' says Moses to us 'the unfortunate and strangers, remembering, that ye were yourselves

unfortunate, and strangers in Egypt. —When ye reap your field, or gather the grapes of your vineyard, forget not to leave a part for those of your brethren who have no field, and no vineyard, that they also may reap and gather.—Every seventh year leave the crop of your lands to the poor. Every seventh year give liberty to your slaves — cherish them — be mindful of them—remembering that ye have been slaves yourselves.—Honour the countenance of the aged, and rise to the bald and hoary head.—Even in the country of your enemy, destroy

not the trees which nourish man.—Extend your regard even to animals—those who are not kind to them, will never be truly so to their brethren. —Let charity be an obligation to him who is susceptible of no pleasure in it. —Suffer not the murderer to purchase with gold the blood he has shed.—Let justice be even-handed to all conditions.—Let pity become so much the habitual sentiment of your hearts —that in taking a nest of birds, the Israelite may consider himself bound to suffer at least the mother to escape.

" Do these prescriptions appear barbarous to you?—and when did we first observe them?—when all Europe eat of the acorn in the forests—when the Mede and the Persian were scarcely civilized—when in Egypt alone were found men who could read.—At this remote epoch, we had a government, which for its simplicity still merits the respect of the wise. A people, separated into tribes,—forming one family—each tribe having its council, to decide upon its interests—a senate composed of elders, chosen in these different councils, to discuss in the

name of the nation its general interests a supreme Judge chosen by the people when the state was in danger —Obedience and Liberty reconciled by a gradual Hierarchy paid by the people, without the power of possessing any thing—God for our king—the Law our master—and all Israel soldiers —such was our republic during the space of four hundred years.—We desired to have monarchs, and many of them reigned with glory. The most celebrated—the most revered name in the East even at this day, is the name of one of our kings. Our

ancient capital is still a sacred city, even in the eyes of our oppressors—our books so long composed are in all your libraries. Where is the people whose laws, whose works, whose name, have so long survived its ruin! Vanquished and dispersed by the Assyrians—settled in their vast dominions—where our industry rendered us rich and powerful—twice did we quit our establishments—our riches—and the comforts of affluence, to return and dwell in the ruins of Jerusalem.. Ah! —if the love of our country be the first of virtues—who has excelled us

in the sense of it? What nation can cite an epoch more glorious than that in which Nehemiah with Esdras led us from the extremities of Persia, in the face of our jealous neighbours—with the sword in one hand, and the trowel in the other, we rebuilt our ramparts, and re-raised our altars. From that time until Titus, we combated incessantly for our independence and our liberty. Our efforts were often successful, and I doubt whether among the Greeks and Romans can be found heroes more brave —more perfect—or more useful to

their country, than were the Maccabees."

I heard the fair Jewess with respectful attention—her beauty—her emotion—all added to her eloquence.—"Madam," said I, "I am not an enemy of the Hebrews—it is not an Amalekite or a Philistine that has the honour of hearing you. I agree with you most sincerely in all you have said—but since your dispersion, it is possible that the vulgar of your people may not always have conducted themselves in such a manner as

to merit the good-will of other nations."

"Other nations," replied she, fixing on me her two fine black eyes, "must not, for their honour, mention their conduct towards the unfortunate Hebrews. After the taking of Jerusalem by the celebrated Titus, who doubtless was justly surnamed the ornament of the human race, although he exercised most revolting cruelties on his Jewish prisoners, which is somewhat extraordinary in the amiable Titus, especially when we consider

that he had a Jewish mistress—After, I say, the horrible state in which the Romans left Judea, the most lively imagination would fail in its conception of the miseries which our people suffered. Adrian especially, Adrian, whose name is not without its glory, persecuted us with all that the most ingenious cruelty could invent—and to a degree that would have made the most ferocious savage recoil with horror. His successors persecuted us as Christians— and when Rome was Christian, its emperors persecuted us as Jews. The barbarian kings who es-

tablished themselves on the wrecks of the empire, made it a point of religion to shed our blood. Wherever your crosses passed, they seized us as their victims — stripped us, and cut our throats—your pastors —your flagellants —every species of fanatic fools, have, during fifteen centuries, regarded as a meritorious action—the killing of Jews. Your kings—your popes—your magistrates, have sometimes, under the absurd pretext that we exercised witchcraft — poisoned waters — and crucified children, delivered us to the tormentors—confiscated our goods

banished us from their dominions—recalled us on the payment of large sums of money, which they have no sooner received than they have driven us away to strip us again at a future time. But although thus made the perpetual sports and victims of sovereigns, priests, and people of every country, nothing has been able to induce us to relinquish our religion—our customs—our name—the only pretext for such enormous barbarities. This constancy during more than two thousand years of misery and misfortune, is, perhaps, worthy of some

estimation: and if a small number of miserable Hebrews have disgraced themselves by usury—by baseness—by an infamous avarice—let the candied man reflect, that one sure mean of rendering any thing despicable is—always to despise it—that our vices are in a great degree the result of our continued contempt—and that it is still more surprising, that, in the midst of the outrages we have endured, the greatest part of our nation should have preserved any virtues."

I was going to repel with earnest-

ness the accusations which the fair Israelite had ventured to urge (as I conceived) with some exaggeration) against the Christians—I was about to demonstrate to her, that we had been at all times the most just and worthy people in the world—when we found ourselves at the gates of the town.—The young Hebrew seeing me look round for an inn, said to me, with an air of freedom and politeness—"My wife Esther, whom you have just heard plead the cause of her nation, with a little too much warmth, has forgotten to tell you, that among the virtues

which are still dear to us, hospitality holds the first place—we should be very happy, if you would permit us the exercise of it this day—condescend to do us the honour of entering our mansion, and accepting there a dinner—we will not confine our liberality to unleavened bread."

I thanked the Hebrew, and, without suffering him to press me farther, accepted his invitation.

His house was not far off. It was small—pretty—newly-built upon the

old rampart, whose tufted trees afforded it both shade and shelter. As I was viewing this charming asylum, I perceived on one of its sides a portion of the wall thrown down.—"I am astonished," said I to Mr. Jonathan (for so Madam Esther called her husband) "that in a house so handsome you leave this side in ruins."

"It is our custom," said he. "Ever since the destruction of the temple, the dwelling of every Hebrew must remind us, in some manner, of the holy city destroyed. If you under-

stood our language, you would read upon this subverted wall these words, taken from the most beautiful of our psalms—'*Sooner let me forget myself than thee, O Jerusalem!*' "

We now entered the house. All was simple and proper—there were neither paintings nor sculpture—a handsome paper covered the walls, and some moveables of coloured wood presented us morocco seats.—Mr. Jonathan had six children; four boys and two girls—the eldest not eight years old—they all came running to em-

brace Madam Esther—and then knelt to their father who blessed them—kissed them—and sent them into the garden.

"You are surprised," said he to me, "at these exterior marks of filial respect—to your eyes, perhaps, somewhat too strongly expressed.—Our nation have always considered them as useful and necessary—for our laws are a great restraint on paternal authority, and therefore what we lose by our laws, we endeavour to regain by our *manners*."

Whilst he was speaking, two catholic servants, who were the whole of their domestics, brought out the table —and prepared our dinner. Madam Esther went and came, to see that in the preparation of their food, all the precepts of the Mosaic law were observed—as of never serving up either rabbit or swine—hare, or the fat of beef or lamb — nor milk-food and meat in the same repast — slaying the beasts they are to eat of, in a way that not a drop of blood may remain—in short, to follow, precisely, a series of customs for which their cooks

are obliged to consult a kind of formulary.

I dared not tell Mr. Jonathan what I thought of these troublesome observances—I was afraid of Madam Esther coming in upon me—indeed she was soon with us—her children followed her. We were all attentive—every one washed hands—and Mr. Jonathan recited a psalm— then he took a whole loaf—blessed it as he broke it—offered each of us a part—and all the ceremonies being ended, I renewed the conversation.

"How many," said I "do you reckon to be the number of Hebrews actually dispersed over the earth?"

"The calculation is not an easy one," said he: "there is considerable difficulty in effecting an accurate enumeration of the inhabitants of a single empire—judge then of the difficulty in numbering a people spread over the four quarters of the world, and almost every-where living obscurely. But if we add to the very great number of Jews settled in Europe, the prodigious number of those who inha-

bit Asia, from Constantinople to Pekin—those which are found upon the coasts of Africa, and in some parts of America, I believe, and am almost certain, that the calculation would exceed five millions of individuals;—you are astonished—you would not be so, were you acquainted with our laws and customs.

"Our laws prescribe marriage before the age of twenty: every Hebrew, who, at that age, takes not a wife, is considered as living in a state of crime. Our brethren in the East have a plu-

rality of wives—and divorce is permitted every-where. These circumstances might be sufficient to account for the immensity of our population—but to these it may be added, that we are, in general, sober, laborious, and continent—that there are no people among whom conjugal faith is so much respected—that we never bear arms—and that we are, perhaps, in Europe, the only people exempt from the two most destructive plagues of the human race—licentiousness and war.

"But for this the persecutions we

have suffered in every country, and the infinite number of Jews massacred, must have rendered our race extinct. But these persecutions have united us more closely—brethren in prosperity may separate—in adversity they embrace. When we were in our Palestine under our kings, under our high priests, we envied, we injured, and insulted, each other—observed not our law—raised temples to idols.—Now that we have no longer either country, priests, or temple—when to obey our God is to endanger our lives—we are more faithful to him—and

can remember that he has commanded us to love each other. It is now our only enjoyment—strangers in every country—ineligible to all its employments—we mingle not with public affairs;—the only ambition allowed us—the only pleasures left us—are those of being the good husband—the good father—in affecting and concentrating in our domestic happiness every species of happiness—in seeking and in finding in our families, the comforts and consolations denied us by the world.

"One of these consolations is, the

zealous observance of the divine precept of charity—your most opulent cities are often filled with your poor—you have rarely met a Jew who has asked you for bread. Wherever we are a little numerous, we have a common purse for our indigent brethren. This purse is never seen, and the way in which it is filled is also a secret, even among ourselves. Your edicts forbid us the possession of landed-property—we are, however, rich enough—and the origin of our fortunes is not usury, as has been too generally and too often asserted, but

activity—an inclination to labour—the necessity of living with less means than others—and the knowledge of commerce which seems to be peculiar to the Hebrews—this knowledge, which in the darker ages produced in us the invention of bills of exchange, rendered us the factors of the world wherever we were dispersed, and contributed more than is generally supposed to form the first links which have since united all the nations of Europe.—Thus to our oppression we owe our wealth—as we owe to it also, in part,

our population, and our benevolence."

"But," said I, "these persecutions are now, at least much mitigated, and in some countries you enjoy all the privileges of citizens."

They leave us peaceable enough in Poland, and in some of the Italian states. In England—and especially in Holland—we are more than tolerated. We there profess our worship publicly—we have synagogues, in which our Rabbies, who are no more

than teachers of the law, exhort us to virtue — to purity — reprove those among us who observe not the Sabbath — celebrate marriages — pronounce divorces —in one word, explain the law. This explication requires not only a profound knowledge of the books of Moses, but also of the *Talmud*, a work much revered among us as a collection of all the opinions and traditions which constitute our *oral* law. We consider as learned those who make a particular study of the Talmud, which may be termed the civil and canonical code of the He-

brews. It would be absurd to appreciate to a Christian the merit of this science.—Unfortunately we have little else; except a few authors who have applied themselves to astronomy, grammar, and medicine, the rest have written nothing but controversy. Our literature is almost nothing—your taste would be slenderly gratified by a Hebrew library. However, we have had some celebrated academies—and we have also some schools in the cities where we are allowed to build synagogues. In those where they are not tolerated —we assemble in a room hired at the

expense of the community, which has no other furniture than some benches —a table—and a chest or cupboard, placed on the eastern side of the room, which is our humble representative of the Ark of Shittim wood covered with plates of gold! It encloses the five books of Moses, written on parchment with a kind of ink, peculiar to the purpose. They are not bound as other volumes, but are copied upon long skins, sewed end to end, not with thread, but with the sinews of a clean animal. These skins are rolled upon two rollers, and the roll is covered with

a rich veil embroidered by the most skilful of our artists. In our assemblies we assign to the highest bidder the honour of carrying this volume from the place in which it is inclosed to the table on which we lay it to read fragments from it. The money thus produced is given to relieve the wants and distresses of our poor. The men are seated on benches, and the women in a railed gallery, and in their respective places, they assist at the reading, and chaunt our Hebrew psalms,—and here is all that remains to us of our famous Temple!"

"Is it here," said I, "that you celebrate your Feasts?"

"Our feasts can be no where celebrated but at Jerusalem: but we retrace a faint image of them, following our peculiar calendar, which we carefully renew every year. Independently of the Sabbath, we have numerous solemnities, which are all relative to the great epochs of our history; such as, *Purim*, for the deliverance of the Jews by Esther. *Hanucca*, for the victories of our Maccabees; and many others; among which you would

be much affected by that which we call the *Atonement.* It is in commemoration of the day on which Moses, after having obtained pardon for the idolatry of the golden calf, re-descended from the mountain with the renewed tables of the Law. It was formerly on this day—the only day of the year—that the high priest entered into the Holy of Holies to offer there the sorrows, the repentance, and the tears of a people too often gone astray. We pass this day in the most rigid fast—we appear at the Synagogue at the dawn of day, not to

depart thence till night, clothed in habits of mourning, with hair and beard disordered. There, we cry, 'O God! have mercy on us!—we have sinned, we have done wrong, we are justly punished—God of goodness, have mercy on us!' Every one lays open his conscience, each implores favour of the Lord, and of his brethren. All animosities are forgotten — old offences are acknowledged with a lively repentance, and forgiven — and we embrace each other, with tears. This spectacle, of a number of men

assembled together to deplore their faults—and earnestly desiring to return to virtue—exists, perhaps, in no other religion in the world, and would strike you at once, with pity and surprise.

"Excuse these long details—I fear I have said more of the Jews than you wished to know but you appeared to me a good man—and the last reflection which occurs to the good when they talk of goodness, is—the probability of their becoming tedious."

I assured Mr. Jonathan of my pleasure in his conversation, and, emboldened by his confidence, I asked him on what subject the manuscript treated which he had been reading that morning—Madam Esther answered me.

"It is a poem," said she, "which my father left me when he died. It has been in our family more than ten generations—the name of the author is unknown. My father, who was a well-informed Rabbi, conceived it to have been written by a Rechabite,

retired beyond Jordan at the period when our hapless Jerusalem, besieged by the Romans, was at the same time rent and torn with internal factions. What adds some weight to this opinion is, what the author says at the commencement of his poem, in addressing himself to the children of Zilpah, that is to say, to the inhabitants of the ancient tribe of Gad. But however it may be, we often read the poem, because we find in it a picture of virtues which we would practise. It would interest you if you understood the Hebrew—it would, at

least, prove to you, that there exist some Jewish books—whose pages are not stained with blood."

Mr. Jonathan added, that he had amused himself with translating it into French. He offered me the perusal of his translation when he had finished it. I accepted his offer with gratitude—and soon after took leave of this amiable and honest family, whom I quitted with the most sensible regret.

Three years after this adventure, I

received the translation of the Hebrew poem, with a letter from Mr. Jonathan, which informed me that his wife and he had quitted the province, then agitated by great disturbances, to settle at Cairo. He gave me his poem, and left me master of its disposal. Having read it, I thought it might possibly interest the few who would condescend to read a moral and pathetic story. I have corrected with my best ability those faults in the French to which the Hebrew translator might be very venially liable, and availing myself of his permission,

I have printed his book—should it be unsuccessful, Mr. Jonathan shall know nothing of it—should it have any success, I shall very sincerely congratulate him.

# ELEAZAR AND NAPHTALI.

## CANTO I.

CHILDREN of Zilpah!—Ye, who mourn before the Lord our fatal discords—ye, who, alone of Israel, have not yet forgotten that we are a nation of brethren—assemble around me: Come, little family, come into the beautiful valley crowned by the mountains of Gilead. There under the shade of antient cedars, reclining on the rocks on which our fathers rested, let us talk of their felicity, and of their

virtues. Let us bring to recollection those happy times when our tribes united adored the Lord of hosts—shared the fruits of the earth — and, long taught, in the Desert, to endure the ills which Nature imposes on us, endeavoured to alleviate them by friendship, concord, and fraternal affection. Ah! let us retrace the picture of those simple and affecting manners—let the aged, who hear me, exult in the reflection that they were born in times less distant from those peaceful days—let the young feel in their hearts the desire of imitating their ancestors—and let the infant, as it looks at me, sitting on its mother's knee, smile at the ravishing picture — pleased — it knows not why.

In the days which succeeded the death of Joshua, Israel had no chief. The tribes, established in their conquests—satisfied with the portion of land allotted to them — thought of nothing but how best to enjoy the blessings of the Almighty. The victorious sword and spear were converted into instruments of agriculture—the ardent courser who had pursued the Amorite in the plains of Gibeon—now slowly drew the plough—and every Israelite, at peace with his God, with his brethren, and with himself, reposed in tranquillity under his vine or fig-tree..

The holy ark was at Shiloh.—Not yet placed in a magnificent temple—a

cover of skins was its humble repository. Rarely did the blood of the heifer stain the altar of holicausts—rarely did the incense of Tadmor burn upon the altar of perfumes—but the reverence—the veneration of a whole people—the purity of the pontiffs—and the fervour of sincere vows addressed to the Most High—rendered it more dear to him than the superb edifice so often profaned in Sion

"Thither, at our principal feasts, came all the tribes of Israel. Thither came the fathers of families, followed by their numerous children, to adore the Lord—to eat the passover with their brethren—and to renew the oath of the divine covenant. There were seen

mothers presenting their children—delighted with their embraces—and only interrupted by the kind and sympathizing intervention of their husbands conversation. The elders proclaimed the laws delivered to Moses on the holy Mount—the trumpet summoned before them the helpless—the orphan—all who might have to complain of fraud or violence—But there was no one to complain—and the elders praised the Lord.

The grandson of Eleazar, the venerable Sadoc, filled the place of Aaron. Sadoc was beloved of God—for Sadoc was the friend of man. He observed with a rigid zeal all the precepts of the law—he prayed with an impassioned

zeal for those who observed them not. During the forty years that he was high priest, the widow, the orphan, the unfortunate of every description, found in him a father and a helper—and, when cheered by his care, assistance, and advice, they would, weeping, kiss his hands, and wonder at his goodness. —"God alone is good," would Sadoc say—"all goodness is from God."

Sadoc was a widower. Two twin sons were all that remained to him of his family—Eleazar and Naphtali—who at the age of scarcely nineteen years were the example and the delight of Israel—beautiful and wise as Joseph—amiable as Benjamin—when, dressed in their white robes, they accompanied

the high priest, and presented to him at the altar the incense, or unleavened bread, the people fancied they saw Abraham between two angels—and when, at sunset, they walked round the city, they would amuse themselves with raising the heavy stones which covered the cisterns, to water the flocks of the young virgins returning from the fields—who, blushing, received their salutations—and, pensive by their mother's side, would read that evening how Jacob chose for his wife her whose flock he had watered.

Eleazar and Naphtali were, as yet, strangers to love. A tender and lively friendship sufficed the purity of their souls. This friendship, to them as

dear and necessary as existence, was connate, and seemed to have no commencement — they had always felt it, and enjoyed it as their life- their hearts were so united, so mingled and confounded—that, without consideration, they scarcely knew in which breast the wish or desire was first formed. Together at the dawn of day —the dawn of the day following found them still together. — The name of brother, which they so much delighted in, added nothing to their proper name—Eleazar without Naphtali —or Naphtali without Eleazar—presented to their minds the idea of annihilation.

There were, however, in their re-

spective characters some marked shades of distinction.

Eleazar not less tender and affectionate than Naphtali, was more grave and serious—he delighted in meditation—was pleased with the conversation of his elders—with the study of the sacred volumes—and with the ceremonies of religion. His mind, early matured, calm and pious, cherished peace and reflection.

Naphtali, more impetuous, but of equal purity, loved virtue, without contemplating its beauty;—his heart open to passion sighed even for its pains—and he preferred to the absence of sentiment, the perturbations of an

acute sensibility. But the prudence of Eleazar tempered the ardour of his brother—while the sensibility of Naphtali had a constant claim on the kind indulgence of Eleazar. Thus, though born with diverse qualities, these qualities were united by love—were interchanged without loss—and each enjoyed the advantages of either. O, the inestimable privilege of friendship! not only to increase our pleasures, but our virtues also.

Naphtali, long exercised in the warlike sports of the Hebrews, could arrest with his arrows the swiftest bird in its aërial flight. There was none in Ephraim could dispute with him the prize of strength and dexterity.

It was his delight, covered with the skin of the leopard—his loins girded with linen, and without other provision than a vase of milk—the bow in his hand, and the quiver at his back—to plunge into the desert—pursue the stag, or the antelope—or to attack the dreadful lion, and return home trophied with his skin. Eleazar, with less strength and skill, for whom the chase would have had little attraction, but as the delight of Naphtali, accompanied him in his most distant courses. And when, in the performance of his devotions, Eleazar, in his turn, would be occupied from the dawn of day to the rising of the evening star, Naphtali, constant to his society, and happy by his bro-

ther's side, thought no longer of the chase.

One day, when they had been coursing, followed by their young friends, over the burning rocks of Rimmon, Naphtali, yielding to the impulse of pursuit in the chase of a panther, had left far behind him Eleazar and the rest of his companions — passed the known boundaries of his accustomed course—and, led from place to place by the animal which he had wounded, rushed on with increased ardour—and plunged into the midst of unknown rocks—until he had lost both his object and his way. Alarmed—not by his own danger—but by his apprehensions for his brother's safety—he

hasten'd back his steps—flew across the exhausted brooks—and climbed the summits of the mountains;—but all that he discovered served but to bewilder him the more. His cries were lost in air—the burning sun dazzled and enveloped him where'er he turned—exhausted by its rays, he cast his languid eyes around him—nothing presents itself, but naked rocks on every side—and above his head a globe of fire. All nature was still — it was morn oppressed by the star of day—the hours fled, and the heat increased —Naphtali renewed his efforts—and shortly felt that dreadful thirst, which in these climates is alone sufficient to cause immediate death. Faint—and almost breathless — he walked sup-

ported by his bow—he raised his languid head—his eyelids drooped before the blazing sun—his thirst increased—oppressed—and was no longer tolerable. He seized the vase of milk—which he still bore in his bosom—this vase, his only resource—his only hope of life. He raised it to his lips—when suddenly he heard behind him an inarticulate cry—and at the same instant perceived a young and beautiful Israelite. With arms extended and dishevelled hair, she sprang forward—and fell at his feet—crying, "I die!—I die!—water!—in pity—water!"

She had not finished her exclamation—before the vase was at her lips. She drank eagerly — without rising

from the ground—without other attention than to the refreshing beverage—while Naphtali stood over her, viewing her features—her form—her expressive eyes—and forehead whiter than alabaster, contrasted with her long black hair, and cheeks incarnadined with heat.

The sufferings of Naphtali were lost in his consideration and contemplation of this beautiful Israelite. He felt a secret charm mingled with a transport so animating—that his soul was penetrated—was filled, as by the power of enchantment—his thoughts were dissipated—and his faculties for a time suspended—by this powerful attraction. Happy in preserving the life of this lovely stranger, he forgot himself—saw

—thought—and considered, of none but her—and as a palsied weakness urged by a great and present danger—the sense of his own distress was banished by her fascinating presence.

Having exhausted the vase to the last drop of its contents—the fair Israelite, with a look of the most expressive gratitude, said—" O, my benefactor!—learn from me the extent of my obligation to you! — This morning early, in the pastures at the foot of the mountains, I led my father's sheep—a troop of armed men suddenly appeared before me—they were the cruel Moabites. I flew—I climbed—I gained the summit of these cragged rocks—on which I have strayed without food

—without a drop of water to refresh my wearied strength.—To you I owe my life!—Ah, come, come with me to my father's house—we will kill the lamb—we will call around us all our family—and they shall express to you—all that my heart has already conceived! I will conduct you—come—if not for your pleasure—at least for ours.—that we may evince—that we may enjoy—our gratitude."

She spoke—Naphtali looked at her—heard her—but his parching thirst, or rather his sense of it, had returned with increased violence—he strove to reply—but his lips half opened served only to discover the adhesion of his tongue. At this instant the veil of

the young Israelite, which hung disordered on her head, fell at his feet. —Naphtali stooped to take it up—seized it with trembling hand—but staggered—fell—and remained extended on the ground without word or motion.

Struck with surprise and fright—she looked at him—and conscious that he was perishing from the same want that a little before had endangered her own life—conscious that she alone was the cause of it—she gave a mournful cry—and knowing there was no help for him but in her father's house—left him, and with the rapidity of a fawn, flew down the mountains for his relief.

In the mean while, Eleazar sought his brother with the most anxious inquiry.—His companions, dispersed by his direction, searched every hole and cavern. Eleazar upon the summit of the rocks looked far and near—and in mournful voice mingled with his prayers to heaven the cry of "Naphtali! my dear Naphtali!"—Then he would listen, motionless, half distracted—and with arms extended toward heaven implore the Almighty to hear his prayers—but the echo of the mountains was his only answer—he drooped his head, and the tears ran down his cheeks.

At length at the close of day, soon after the departure of the young Is-

raelite, Eleazar arrived at the foot of the rock, where Naphtali deprived of sense, lay extended on the ground—still grasping in his hand the veil of the fair Israelite.

At the sight of his brother, Eleazar tore his vestments—and throwing himself on the body—embraced it—turned it—examined it—and perceiving no wound—he called to his companions, and collecting into a vase the little milk that remained with each, he poured the kindly liquid within the pale, parched lips of the unhappy Naphtali. Naphtali opened his dim and languid eyes—they sought the Israelite—but wearied with the effort, closed again—his feeble hand slowly

conveying to his bosom the veil it had retained.

Eleazar and his friends, having with traversed arms formed a bed on which they gently raised him, conducted by a shepherd of the mountains, returned to Shiloh.

But inexpressible was the grief of Sadoc, when he saw his dying son.—In vain did the pious Eleazar disguising his own fears, endeavour to console him with assurances, that he would restore his brother.—The old man remained motionless, mourned, and in silence raised his eyes to heaven—not daring to complain to his God, though of an affliction beyond his strength to bear.

To Naphtali every kind of help and comfort was supplied. Placed on a bed of soft skins--refreshed by small and frequent portions of the exquisite wine of En-gedi, the young Hebrew returned to himself—his eyes recognized his father—his arms were raised to embrace his brother, who on his knees beside him with one hand supported his drooping head, and with the other presented drink. — Sadoc, weeping, viewed them both—and the whole population of Shiloh assembled round the house, expressing by their cries, their anxiety, and love for Naphtali.

The next day was the sixteenth of the month Sivan—the fiftieth after the

Passover, that is the fiftieth day after the departure out of Egypt, when the Eternal, upon Mount Sinai, deigned, himself, to give laws to his chosen people. The memory of this day was duly celebrated. The high priest, assisted by the Levites, presented in the name of the children of Jacob, two leavened loaves of new meal, the first fruits of the harvest. He sacrificed as a burnt-offering, two young bulls, a ram, seven lambs without blemish, and the male of the unruly she-goat, in expiation of the sins of a too often disobedient people. After the sacrifice of acknowledgment, every family united for the purpose of innocent and cheerful enjoyment — and every Israelite opened his doors to his breth-

ren of other tribes—on this day of festivity, the sole occupation of the whole family of Jacob was, to draw closer the bands of an affectionate fraternity.

Sadoc, after having fulfilled the sacred duties of his ministry, returned to devote his attention to his son. The pious Eleazar had never quitted Naphtali—even to assist at the sacrifice. But when night was come—and a deep and quiet sleep had closed the eyes of him he watched—Eleazar ran to the tabernacle. There prostrate on the ground—with hands extended to the border of the vail which covered the Holy of Holies, long and ardent were his supplications—for he prayed for his brother.

The day had already dawned, and pale was the light cast by the seven lamps of the golden candlestick, when Eleazar arose to return to Naphtali. As he was passing out of the second inclosure, he was suddenly met by a young Israelite, bringing in her hands two doves, and leading a white lamb. Anxiety and grief were depicted in her countenance. The blush of modesty suffused her face, in which piety and chastity were combined with grace. She approached Eleazar with downcast eyes, and addressed him in these words:—

" Pardon, holy Levite, pardon a stranger, who would for a moment detain you. Although a stranger in

Shiloh, I am not an infidel. I dwell in Benjamin—in the hamlet of Luza. My name is Rachel. My father Abdias adores the God of Isaac. I come to present to the Eternal this lamb, and these two doves—the only wealth the daughter of a simple shepherd has to offer. Deign son of Aaron, to immolate them for me on the altar, and implore of the most High the favour I request."

She was silent. Eleazar looked at her without the power of reply. His heart was too deeply affected by the sweetness of her accent. Wounded by a stroke which made him bless the wound, he stood motionless with admiration—his senses were inflamed—

he felt a strange and pleasing perturbation—expected torture—and found it ecstacy.

Extending his trembling hand to the modest Rachel, "Daughter of Abdias," said he, "come, attend your sacrifice—your presence will render it more pure. I will immolate your victims—I will, myself, present your gifts—but that my ardent prayers may unite with yours—answer with sincerity and confidence—what do you require of Heaven?"

The eyes of Rachel were again cast down—and deeper was the blush. "Son of Levi," she replied, "the pure sentiment which animates me will not

—ought not to be concealed. I come to implore the Most High for a mortal, to whom I owe my life—his life is in danger—and I cannot help him! —May Heaven turn on me the affliction he this moment suffers!—This is my request—this is my prayer—and the object of my sacrifice!—The gratitude inspired by Heaven—may be confessed at Heaven's altar."*

As she pronounced these words—the tears stood in her eyes—and Eleazar felt his own. He turned towards the Sanctuary—washed his hands and feet in the brazen laver—and prepared his fire on the altar of holycausts. The

Orig. *Le lieu saint.* *Vide* Exod. xxvi. 33.

Levites came to offer their assistance in his preparations, but he declined it —while Rachel on her knees in the court of the Tabernacle, holding her right hand extended on the head of her lamb, and presenting with her left the doves, awaited the instant of sacrifice. Nor was it long ere the sacred flame blazed before the Lord. Eleazar seized the victims, and shed their blood on the north side of the altar. The sacrificer added an ephah of pure flour, and pouring on them new oil, they were enveloped with a consuming flame. Rachel prostrate invoked in a low and humble voice the Majesty of heaven —while Eleazar in a voice more audible, implored of him a propitious hear-

ing of the prayers of the pious Benjaminite—and to spare the life of him for whom she was so cordially interested. From her words, he had no doubt it was for her father she felt so great anxiety—and this idea combined with the recollection of his brother's danger, rendered his prayer more earnest—while the similarity of sentiment which he felt in his own breast with that of Rachel, augmented if possible, the flame of love she had kindled there, and which raged with inextinguishable ardour.

The sacrifice was scarcely completed, when Eleazar suddenly started up—his eyes sparkling with joy. He ran to

Rachel, crying, " Hear what saith the Lord—Return to your house—health is restored to the object of your anxiety. Render thanks to the God of your fathers—and think of the Levite who thanks you for having chosen him your sacrificer."

Rachel knelt and adored. She arose—and having dried up her tears—she cast on Eleazar a look of gratitude, and immediately departed.

The son of Sadoc dared not detain her—his eyes followed her—he sighed—but the recollection of his brother roused him from his reverie—he hastened his return, and found the house

decked with garlands—Naphtali was out of danger, and inquiring for his brother—and weak as he was, he at the threshold received Eleazar in his arms, whom surprise and joy had almost deprived of sense.

## CANTO II.

NOW was all Israel engaged in acts of friendship and of festive joy. The old and young—husbands and wives—fathers and mothers—all clothed in their best apparel. Every one set out his table at his door, covered with inviting delicacies — with delicious food. The young virgins, clothed in linen, and crowned with white roses, danced through the city to the sound of citterns and cymbals. Parents and friends assembled—the various tribes

intermingled—elders, priests, and labourers—the inhabitants of the city and the hamlet—formed but one family—hand joined in hand indicated their union in the name of Jacob—embracing, they exclaimed, "We are children of the same father—we enjoy the same blessings — we obey the same laws." Immense as were their numbers, they seemed to have but one soul in the celebration of this delightful festival of kindness and amity.

Sadoc was in the midst of them accompanied by his two sons. All pressed upon his steps—wherever he appeared, all hands were extended toward heaven—the prayers of all were for the pontiff and his family. Every one

contended for a nearer view of the amiable Naphtali, so happily restored by Heaven—every one congratulated his father, and answered, with tears of joy, the tears of gratitude which stood in the old man's eyes.

Naphtali still pale and languid, supported by Eleazar, walked slowly by the side of his father. The eyes of Eleazar were constantly on him, and his looks expressed the mingled sensations of joy and anxiety. Naphtali would at times encourage him with a smile—but, alas! too evident was the sadness that accompanied it—each had a secret as yet untold—the reserve of which, the ardour and intimacy of their friendship rendered to their con-

viction criminal—both were disquieted — and in their external expressions of affection, their consciences accused them of withholding the confidence it demanded.

As soon as they returned home—without communicating their design—without evincing their intention by the slightest indication of it — they withdrew from their friends — and walked, by different ways, to the lonely extremity of the field that fed them. —By the side of a rapid stream—the ancient boundary of their inheritance, under the shade of a large fig-tree, planted by the Canaanites — was a grassy seat, where the two brothers were accustomed of an evening to re-

tire, and meditate upon the holy law —and, relaxing from their rural labours, to cultivate their mutual friendship. To this place they had always come together—this day produced the first instance of their *meeting* there— "I have been waiting for you," said they, both arriving at the same time. They now eagerly embraced—looked— and embraced again. When seated by each other—Naphtali prepared to speak, but was prevented by Eleazar.

"O, Naphtali!—how great the affliction that has threatened us — what thanks do we not owe to Heaven, for your restoration.—Prostrate before the holy ark; in ineffectual prayers and supplications that the Eternal would

spare our youth—and grant us a longer day for the perfection of our love—I was hopeless—no auspicious sign answered my prayers. It is evident, said I—Heaven this day presents to me the cup of his wrath—he has placed a cloud before his face, impervious to my prayers—he will deprive me of my brother.—And I was returning, Naphtali, not to mourn you dead—but to die with you.—Alas! what are we Naphtali!—how great our weakness!—how irresistible the power—of a sentiment—until this day a stranger to my soul.—In the bosom of despair—under such an accumulation of grief as rendered existence imperceptible, but by its overwhelming pressure—I saw the young and beauteous Rachel

—the daughter of the shepherd Abdias. My heart flew towards her—as the light chaff unto the precious amber.—Oh, Naphtali, had you seen her, on her knees, holding in her hands two doves—her eyes raised to heaven—filled with tears—adorned with grief—more lovely in her sorrow.—She prayed for her father!—he dwells in Benjamin—in the hamlet of Luza — she implored the Most High to save the author of her days—to spare the life of him to whom she owed her own!—Her piety—her affecting virtue—was depicted in her modest countenance—her eyes beamed holy reverence and filial love.—I confess, Naphtali—to you, I should confess it—when I looked at the lovely Rachel—I ceased to think on you—it

was the only moment of my life.—Pardon me, Naphtali!—grant me immediate pardon—and await not as an inducement the experience of a passion whose first and instant consequence was,—the oblivion of such a brother!"

Thus he said, and hid his face in the bosom of Naphtali. Naphtali looked at him, and wept.

"Alas, Eleazar, I have need of the same consideration—the pardon must be reciprocal—I love like you—like you I burn with a devouring fire!—My heart, which could scarce contain the increasing sentiment of our friendship—which to conceive desire—to feel regret—had then to seek the object of

its want or wish—that heart with a bias involuntary and irresistible, agitated and disquieted—inclines, now, to another.—It presents—it desires—it seeks a happiness—where Eleazar is not all!—this happiness I know not—alas!—I no longer know myself!—I feel my soul this instant, tormented—tortured—like the stone in a sling impelled by a giant's arm—the next, absorbed by the contemplation of her who haunts my imagination where'er I turn—I am isolated by my desires—to see again—to hear—to speak to her!—the time that passes—and she absent—seems to me no longer life!—the world—to me—contracted to the spot where I may again meet her.—I am nigh you—I sigh—I embrace you—but I am

not happy!—Oh, my Eleazar—pardon *me!*—or rather let us mutually be assured—that our souls are still the same—the sacred flame of friendship has not abated of its ardour—it still animates—sustains us—is all by which we live—but there is a different flame consumes us—and we die!"

Naphtali then related how, on the rocks of Rimmon, he had saved the life of the fair Israelite—that at the first sight of her, he felt the flame, thenceforth to be his destiny.—That he knew nothing of her but her beauty and her kindness—that he knew not even her name—and drawing from his bosom the veil she had dropped, he shewed it to his brother—unfolded it—

kissed it—and with trembling hand placed it next his heart. Then suddenly reproaching himself with having occupied Eleazar so long with his own concern—"Eleazar," said he, "my distress, my distraction is great—is intolerable—but there is one way in which it will certainly admit of alleviation—it is, in the endeavour to restore your happiness. Nor will the attainment of its object be doubtful or difficult. You know that the fair Rachel lives with her father Abdias, in the hamlet of Luza. Think you that a Hebrew shepherd will refuse his daughter to a son of the High-priest—or that he will not rather offer thanks to Heaven in the presentation of her? Can you have a doubt that the heart of Rachel

will beat with pleasure and with pride, in learning that she is destined for the young Eleazar—already celebrated for his virtue, piety, and the many amiable qualities which make all Israel love him—with all but his brother's love. Be assured, my Eleazar, I have only to mention to our venerable father your passion for Rachel—and Rachel will be your wife. He will send me instantly to Luza—I shall find Abdias—I shall obtain his daughter for you—I will bring her to you myself—and your happiness will render me more paient in the hope or search of mine.

Eleazar consented to the suggestions of Naphtali—but Rachel no longer sufficed for the completion of his happi-

ness—the discovery of the young and beautiful stranger, as the object of his brother's happiness, was necessary to his own. He thought of her—talked of her—while Naphtali spoke only of the daughter of Abdias—the mutual interruptions of either were, to forget his own, in his brother's interest—and from the moment of their mutual confidence, they seemed to have exchanged the object of their affections.

Summoned by the voice of Sadoc—they returned to the old man. Naphtali immediately informed his father of his brother's passion. "Why, my son," said the Pontiff, extending his hand to Eleazar, "why have you not yourself made known to me this desire

of your soul—know you not, my children, that to add to your happiness, is, to augment my own. Ah, timid Eleazar, come to my bosom—and congratulate your father, on the pleasure with which he confirms your choice."—Then addressing Naphtali—"Prepare, my son," said he, "to set out to-morrow for Luza. Mount the patient animal that aids us in the labours of the field—take with you two measures of new barley meal—and add some dried raisins, dates, and wild-figs—present these simple presents to the father of young Rachel, and request him, in my name, to bestow his daughter on my son—And for her I will give you the eardrops, and two rings of gold, that were your mother's."

Thus he said—the preparations were made—and on the morrow, at the dawn of day, Naphtali was on his road to Luza.

It was but a day's journey—and before the setting of the sun, Naphtali arrived at the hamlet. He inquired for the house of Abdias, which being shewn him, he knocked at the gate, and an old man presented himself.

"What do you desire?" said he, "Are you one of our brethren?—But though you be not, honour my mansion by reposing here this night."

Naphtali bowed before Abdias. "Blessed be heaven!" said he. "My

business at Luza is, to offer you, on the part of Sadoc, the pontiff of the living God, these presents—the fruits of the earth—the gifts of the Eternal. My father Sadoc requests you to bestow your daughter Rachel on my brother Eleazar, whose name must have already reached you, and whom Israel considers as the worthy successor of Aaron and of Sadoc."

"Are you not mistaken, my son?" replied the old man, smiling. "Is it to the shepherd Abdias, the most obscure, and least wealthy of the children of Jemini, that the high priest of the Hebrews sends to demand his daughter?"

"Yes:" said Naphtali, "it is to you.

All descended from the same father—in our tribes—in our families—among ourselves—there is no other distinction of rank, than the respect due to superior virtue.—The children of Levi hold the censer—it is their brethren who pray—the most just are the most excellent."

Abdias answered only by seizing the hand of Naphtali, and pressing it between his own. He then attested heaven, that, from that moment, his daughter was the spouse of Eleazar.—"She is in the fields," said he; "she has not yet led home her flock—but the sun, already sunk behind the mountains of Seir, announces to me that she will soon return.—Enter, my son, enter my rus-

tic roof—I will go and select the kid that shall be slain for you."

He then conducted Naphtali into his peaceful dwelling, and instantly went out.

Naphtali, as the brother of Eleazar, in this lonely cottage, felt a pleasure—a tender interest—a spontaneous tranquillity—to himself inexplicable. In this humble asylum every thing attracted his eye and fixed his attention. He viewed the white earthen vases, ranged in order, to receive the milk—the rushen baskets hung beneath—the shepherd's crook—the garland of flowers (now faded) which at the late feast, adorned the lovely Rachel—every ob-

ject spoke to the heart of Naphtali—he became agitated, but he discarded every idea but that of his brother's interest, and attributed to friendship the emotions that disturbed him.

The bleating of a flock returning from pasture was heard near the mansion. Naphtali trembled—dared not to move—and asked himself the cause. He looked for Abdias—he called him—the old man came—and led by the hand his daughter. Naphtali viewed her—it was she!—It was the fair Israelite whose life he had saved!—It was the lovely stranger whose image, always present in his heart, rendered inextinguishable the flame that consumed it!

Motionless, as the traveller surprised by a storm in the desert, he stood, with extended arms, suppressing the exclamation just ready to escape him. Rachel with downcast eyes, silently advanced.

"My daughter," said Abdias, "you are to consider this day as the happiest of your life. The virtuous Eleazar, the son and heir of the high priest, desires you for his spouse. His brother, whom you see, has just received my vow—grant him your faith, as he has mine—and render thanks to heaven, who has deigned to honour your youth and my gray hairs with so distinguished an alliance."

At these words, Rachel raised her head, and cast a bashful glance on the brother of her spouse—she recognised him—she gave a shriek—her head fell back—paleness o'erspread her countenance—her knees trembled—bent—and she fell motionless into the arms of her father. Naphtali ran to support her—Abdias recalled her to life.

Rachel, thus recovered, assured her father that she was now well, and pretended that the cause of her illness arose from thirst; then, looking at Naphtali with marked expression, she requested him to bring her drink. Naphtali, who too well understood her, filled with pure water a wooden vase—kissed

the brim—and, almost breathless, and with trembling hand, presented it. Rachel touched it with her lips, and returned it to him. Then turning to the old man—"Father," said she, with feeble voice, "you have given me to the son of Sadoc—it is my duty silently to obey. My heart will be ready to follow my hand, if the brother of Eleazar will, from his own mouth, assure me that he has come thus far to call me—*Sister!*

She accompanied these words, addressed to Naphtali, with a look of love combined with anger. It penetrated the very soul of the young Hebrew—His agonizing struggle is inexpressible

—Friendship was the support of virtue. —His honour—friendship—love—toward the absent Eleazar, surmounted his passion for the present Rachel.—"*Yes*," said he, with impassioned accent, "*yes;—yes;*—my brother dies for you—his happiness—his destiny—his life—depend on the obtaining you. I have requested—I have desired—the office of presenting you his vows; and on my knees I repeat his earnest and respectful prayer."

He spake these words with inappropriate haste, doubtful of his power to finish them, and with averted eyes he fell at her feet. Conscious that he had performed his duty—that he had pre-

served his fidelity to his bother—his heart was less oppressed; and in the languid tranquillity in which his virtuous struggle left him, he awaited the reply of Rachel.

The lovely Israelite heard him, and alternately turned pale and blushed. She withdrew from Naphtali, having made a sign to him to rise, and approaching her father, astonished by her long silence—"I am satisfied," said she,—"I will espouse Eleazar—I only request the liberty of devoting the remainder of the day to my companions,—I love them—I love the spot where Rachel has received her life—where Rachel was a long time happy!—To-morrow she must quit them!—The

messenger of Eleazar will, doubtless, forgive my tears!"

Thus she said, and with hurried steps withdrew.

Her father endeavoured to excuse to the sorrowful Raphtali his daughter's tears. Alas! unhappy in himself, he had to hide his own. He spoke of nothing but his brother, and of the respect—the care—and affection of which Rachel was to become the object. Thus he amused the mind of Abdias, and prevented his perception of the trouble that distracted him.

Night had extended her sable veil

when Rachel returned. Her countenance was serene—and she called Naphtali her brother. Mindful of fulfilling all the duties of hospitality toward him, she prepared a bed of lamb-skins for his repose that night—provided the banquet—decked the table with flowers—and, seated by the young Hebrew, presented him a part of the kid. Abdias, contented, smiled on his daughter. —Naphtali dared not venture a look—and Rachel, without troubling him with questions or entreaties, made a short evening and retired to rest.

At the dawn of day, Rachel was prepared for the journey. Her father had resolved to accompany her, and Naph-

tali thanked heaven for his resolution. —Rachel carried with her the golden ornaments which Sadoc had sent her, and mounted the patient animal of which Naphtali held the reins.—Abdias, by his side, directed them the way.

Naphtali walked with drooping head, not daring to cast a look on her whom he conducted.—Rachel silently observed him, repeating to herself the persuasion that Naphtali had never loved her—that when he saved her life, his motive was but pity,—that he had requested the cruel office of demanding her for another—and that the gloomy melancholy which she saw in his countenance, was but a trait of character,—

Then she would feel a secret vexation, which she mistook for hatred;—her heart applauded her—exhorted, and promised an encreasing hatred of the man who had thus disdained her. Still she availed herself of the situation of the young Hebrew to keep her eyes on him incessantly—reproaching herself with their unmerited direction, but which she still found irresistible.

Abdias, long acquainted with the shortest roads that led to Shiloh, took a different route from that which Naphtali had followed the preceding day. They traversed a long plain, covered only with palm-trees—passed by Mount Ephraim, and arrived about the third

hour at the foot of the rocks of Rimmon. Naphtali, who followed Abdias without observing the places that he passed, ascended after him by a narrow, winding path, beset with briars. The difficulties of the way, and his continued attention to the safety and accommodation of Rachel, diverted, for a time, his gloomy thoughts. After a long and troublesome journey, they reached the summit of those desert rocks; there, casting a look before him, Naphtali recognised the spot where Rachel had implored his help. He stopped—he trembled—and, by an involuntary movement, his eyes met those of Rachel. Rachel's awaited them, but endured them not. Her head sunk upon

her bosom—and with her hands she hid her tears. Naphtali reclining on a part of the rock, Abdias hastened towards him. "Let us rest, my son," said he, "we have performed half of our journey—let us sit down awhile." Abdias, thus saying, extended his arms to his daughter—helped her to alight, and led her to Naphtali; when, having placed them by the side of each other, he seated himself.

After a silence long and sad, Abdias wishing to break in upon it, asked Naphtali at what time, and on what occasion, Eléazar had seen Rachel. Naphtali then related, how she had come to the Tabernacle—that his bro-

ther had offered the sacrifice of two doves and a lamb, which Rachel had presented for the recovery of her father.—"Of me!" cried Abdias, addressing his daughter, "what vain alarms have caused this anxiety in you for my life—a life never yet endangered? Why conceal from me your intention? Why has not thy filial piety made known to thy father the prayers and supplications of which he was the object?"

"You are mistaken," replied Rachel, "the sacrifice was not for you.—At the dawn of the same day, I was pursued by the Moabites—and wandering afterwards, terrified, among these rocks, my life was saved by the

timely succour of a young hunter.—I left him dying who had rescued me from death! I returned to find him, but I saw him no more. Anxious for his fate—trembling with apprehension that he had fallen into the hands of our enemies, I sat out, when night commenced, to bear my humble offering to the house of God, and to implore the safety of him to whom I owed my own.—Eleazar prayed for my father—I prayed for my benefactor!"

At these words, Rachel blushed; and Naphtali, transported, exclaimed, "O Heaven! what do I hear? Was it for the too happy mortal....?" "*Yes,*" replied Rachel, looking at him,—"it

was for my deliverer!—I thought his life in danger,—I thought—— but I was mistaken! I have since found, that he enjoyed both life and happiness,—I have since found—that he had alike forgotten his own danger—and my obligation to him!" At these last words, Naphtali arose with haste and agitation—"Father," said he, to the old man, "let us be gone—my brother expects us."

## CANTO III.

THE sun had sunk beneath the western hills, and the scattered flocks collected, slowly descended from the mountains, when Abdias, his daughter, and Naphtali, approaching Shiloh, perceived the purple tent which enclosed the Tabernacle. At the sight of the holy place they stopped and bowed; and, after a short prayer, continuing their journey, they soon arrived at the gates.

There Sadoc and Eleazar, followed by their relatives and friends, had long awaited them.

A chosen company of blooming virgins, clothed in long white robes, and bearing lilies in their hands, presented themselves to Rachel,—encompassed her—crowned her with flowers, and conducted her, as in triumph, to the pontiff, who advanced to receive her. She cast herself at his feet—Sadoc raised her, embraced her, and presented her to Eleazar, whose heart palpitated with love and joy. Rachel was silent. Eleazar, transported with happiness, looked around for his brother.—He called him—stretched out his arms to receive him, and, turning to Rachel, joined

their hands, and pressed them to his bosom. Thus walked Eleazar in the midst of all he loved.—The pontiff, with Abdias, followed—the young virgins preceded them, and the inhabitants of Shiloh, assembled on the way, filled the air with shouts of congratulation, on the union of Eleazar and Rachel.

Arrived at the house of the high priest, Sadoc publicly announced that, on the next day, the marriage of his son should be consecrated by sacrifice—and the people separated to their homes.

Sadoc presented to his guests the fruits and refreshments prepared for them; and directing his attention more particularly to Abdias, he proposed to

him that he should pass the remainder of his days with his beloved daughter at Shiloh,—" Let us be united," said the good old Sadoc; " age has need of friends; but where, at our age, can we look for them but in our family? The name of father obtains that indulgence a father so easily repays. Under that endearing name, we grow old with impunity.—The divided attentions of Rachel shall be made up to you by Eleazar,—what I lose in Eleazar, I shall find in Rachel. Our children will be confounded in our affections—our riches in them will be doubled."

Abdias promised not to leave them, and Rachel thanked him for his promise. She received with gratitude the

attentions of Eleazar; and Naphtali, endeavouring to conceal his emotions, smiled and congratulated both.

Thus they passed the evening; and when the half-extinguished lamps announced the lateness of the hour, Sadoc desired his sons to pass the night in the house of a relation—and to the house of Phanuel, they withdrew to sleep.

But sleep, that night, approached the eyes of neither. Eleazar perceived the sadness of Naphtali, and attributing to his fair Israelite the cause, he endeavoured by talking of her, to encourage his hopes, and promised soon to join him in the search. Naphtali strove, but, alas! in vain, to dispel his sadness, by

talking of his brother's happiness as the spouse of Rachel. Eleazar still returned to her whom he presumed the object of Naphtali's inquietude—he could only be happy in his brother's ease; but in seeking to assuage the wound, he inflamed it to his torture.

The dawn of day appeared, and Eleazar chose from a number of beautiful garments, the most beautiful. Naphtali assisted him—disposed his long tresses to flow gracefully under his rich tiara, and covered his shoulders with a long purple robe, a prize which, in the warlike games of Israel, the skill and courage of Naphtali had obtained. Thus decorated was the happy Eleazar, beautiful in his youth,

and in the animation which good fortune inspires; thus were the gifts of nature and fortune adorned with the more precious tribute of fraternal love, —and thus to Sadoc they returned.

They found the Levites in their festal dress—and the young women and the people assembled, awaiting at the gate the lovely bride. She appeared clothed in white—her face was covered with a broidered veil. Timid, agitated, and trembling, she walked by her father's side, having refused the proffered support of Naphtali. Eleazar, transported with joy, flew as chief of the Levites—arrived first at the tabernacle—brought forth the victims, and presented them himself to Sadoc. Twelve rams were

immolated. The people joined in prayer with the pontiff—desired with him that the present Rachel, beautiful as the former, might be fruitful as Leah—and that the bride and bridegroom might together, like Sarah and Abraham, descend into the vale of years.

In the same order in which they went they returned, proceeding through the town—singing hymns of old—and strewing the way with flowers.

This ceremony ended, Sadoc presented for their signature the engagement they had mutually contracted. The hand of Eleazar trembled with joy—the hand of Rachel trembled more.—Naphtali had retired—his bro-

ther sought him; found him, and brought him to partake of the marriage feast. He placed him by the side of Rachel, and while Sadoc did the honours of the feast with his assembled family, the happy, the amiable Eleazar spoke of nothing but of his hope and desire always to live with two objects so equally dear to him, and that he might see them love each other, as he loved them both.

Alas, unhappy pair!—they promised; and they blushed!—conscious that they indeed felt all that they expressed—they trembled! But Naphtali could confide in a virtue fortified by friendship—Rachel was destitute of this double guard, and alarmed by the dan-

ger, sought to escape it. Her project was instantly conceived, and, too desperate for delay, she availed herself of a moment of tumult on rising from the feast, to desire a private conversation with the wretched Naphtali.

They walked without looking at each other towards the solitary fig-tree planted by the side of the stream. Rachel seated herself against its venerable trunk, and requested Naphtali to sit near her; then, in a firm, determined, tone :—

"The time," said she, "is precious, and will not admit of dissimulation; let us not strive to hide our struggles—but make victory sure:—I love you! —the passion that disturbs us is mu-

tual, violent, and inveterate—I hate myself while I confess it to you!—but your virtue has left me no other means to equal it.

"Of all that has passed since that fatal day when I first presented myself to the eyes of Eleazar, I am ignorant—may I ever remain so,—of this I am, alas, too certain—that you have sacrificed to a brother's love, the love you had for me!—The sacrifice is great—is noble—but you are unhappy!—Yet, in having sacrificed love to friendship, you have friendship to console you still—and I am sensible that we ought not to complain, when to the glory of having done our duty we can add the consola-

tion which a tender sentiment inspires.

"I, Naphtali, have no brother!—I am the wife of Eleazar—but it is you I would have chosen—it is you, who saved my life!—Thus conscious, will not the admiration your noble, but distressing sacrifice excites in me,—the continual observance of your struggles—your triumphs—will it not daily strengthen that sentiment which I should now extinguish? You would be in vain a conqueror—your victories would enfeeble me! The more sorrowful I saw you, the more amiable you would appear.—I might conceal my own sufferings—but how could I endure yours!—from this state of danger

it is for you to relieve me.—Fly! fly! far from this place. Though it be not necessary to your virtue—I fear—I feel it is to mine!—nor is it less so to your brother's happiness, which can never duly be the object of my attention—while you are with me.!—Think, invent some specious pretext—but go far from Rachel!—If it be possible to eradicate from your breast this fatal passion, return—if not—for ever leave me!"

She said, and turned toward the house.—Naphtali seized her hand—but scarcely had he touched it, than, alarmed; he withdrew his own—endeavoured to collect his scattered powers—and without raising his eyes to Rachel, addressed her thus:—

"Oh, Rachel,—Oh, my sister,—do not fear—it is to your last words, only, I will reply. I will depart this night! —I will never see you more!—never shall I see again—my brother!—pardon my tears! guiltless they fall—for him!

—— I feel I should have fled, without reply—but I must inform you (it is necessary to your repose, and to my brother's peace)—that Eleazar has not only never suspected that I had seen you first, he is ignorant (and I would have him so) that Rachel is that Israelite........it is enough my sister—let this interview remain an eternal secret between my heart and your virtue—let not Eleazar ever know this final test of friendship!—his happiness would

be for ever lost—and fruitless would be my sacrifice.

"There remains but one more duty to perform—and it is due unto your honour—I would return into your hands the only pledge of a love no longer innocent—take back this veil, which,—you let fall at my feet—this veil, which, from that moment, has been the companion of my bosom—it is here, Rachel!........Let us return—I tremble, lest this secret conversation become a crime—may it be at least useful to my brother.—To-morrow, when Eleazar shall lament me gone, and you shall be his only comforter, say to him, Rachel,—'Naphtali has confided to me his sufferings—he cannot live but in

the possession of his lovely stranger—and he is gone to die, regretting her!' —The event, Rachel, will justify the assertion!" He presented the veil—she took it, and tnrew it on her head without reply.

They returned together to the house —Sadoc met them—and embracing his daughter, in gentle terms complained of her long absence, and conducted her to her anxious and inquiring family. Naphtali had separated, and studiously avoiding Rachel, sought his brother.

But the society of Rachel and Naphtali, on which the happiness of Eleazar, so constantly, so continually depended, could not be long withdrawn

unnoticed. They had scarce quitted the festive hall, when perceiving them to be absent, he immediately went out—followed them at a distance—and, seeing them seated together, took a long circuit, to approach them unperceived. Nor was diffidence, suspicion, or curiosity, the motive. He suspected no secrets in his brother, and had therefore no intention to surprise them. The happy and affectionate Eleazar, without design, without reflection, with that frank and open confidence which always accompanies a real friendship, resigned himself to the levity of the moment, and not fearing to offend those by whom he could not be offended, easily allowed in himself all that he would as easily have pardoned.

On his approaching them, he saw Naphtali deliver to Rachel the veil he had borne in his bosom, and which Eleazar knew to be that of his fair Israelite—he heard the last words pronounced by Naphtali—those words and the veil discovered all!—his brother's sufferings, his brother's virtue, and the distress of Rachel, were at once revealed.—Motionless he stood—his head drooped upon his breast—his arms were extended toward the ground—and, supported by the fig-tree, he saw—he heard—no more! Darkness o'erspread his eyes, and his soul, subdued by an astounding sorrow, resigned her consciousness—as one who by lightning struck, sees but the flash, and dies!

In the mean time, Rachel and his brother had re-entered the house.

When Eleazar recovered, he looked around—he saw himself alone, and in his freedom felt a gloomy joy. He advanced to the border of the stream—he viewed its foaming waters—tried its depth—and suddenly abandoning himself to the suggestions of despair—"God of goodness," he exclaimed, "I here appeal but to thy justice!—Were I alone to suffer, I should humbly bow, in reverence to thy divine decrees—but my wife, my brother, are wretched—and I alone the cause!—they are wretched, and each succeeding day will but enhance their misery—a misery entailed on them so long as I shall see the

light!—to refuse their sacrifice is no longer in my power—to accept it is no less impossible—and it is forbidden me to lament with them. All that can render life desirable, love, friendship, virtue, combine and separate, with perverse effect, to multiply my torments—Oh, Heaven! be my judge—my brother would die for me—alas!—his death would but add to my distraction—mine would restore his peace."

Eleazar was just going to throw himself into the stream, when, casting a look behind, he saw the house—that house in which his good old father lived, whose fostering hand had reared him in his tender years—where now he heard the voice of mirth, the songs of

joy, the prayers to heaven for his happiness. He saw the grassy seat on which, in infancy, Naphtali and he had passed whole days in mutual testimonies of their early love, and ever until then had sworn to live and die together—even the wild-fig-tree, like an old and honest friend, seemed to reprove him—he clasped its aged trunk, a stay against himself.

These horrid transports were now succeeded by a calmer sorrow—he wept—his tears relieved him—restored his reason, and the mildness of his nature. —"Nò—No," said he, "I will not by a voluntary death profane this hallowed spot—this blest abode of nature in her dearest amities!—Here my father has

embraced me—here have I witnessed the thousand testimonies of a brother's love—the place is holy, sacred to peace, and it is sacrilege to violate it, even by a legitimate sorrow.—Let me fly, let me fly,—and in the wild and lonely desert seek some unblest spot, repulsive to society—to scenes of social happiness and affection—where all in cheerless sympathy may suit the solitary purpose of despair!"—Then with hurried pace he ascended the bank of the stream, sought the most pervious parts of the rocks to expedite his flight, crossed the high mountains, and plunged into the dreary desert.

'In the meanwhile Naphtali, alarmed, and with incessant question, sought his

brother. Rachel, Sadoc, and Abdias imagined him at the Tabernacle, engaged in prayer. The night advanced, and Naphtali, sad and restless, returned from the Tabernacle—then again resumed his ineffectual search in the adjoining field—stopped at the wild-fig-tree, and with loud and tremulous voice called Eleazar!—he heard but the noise of the rapid stream, rolling precipitant from rock to rock. He returned to his family and friends—questioned with impatience—and negligent of answer, again went forth, returned, and was informed that his brother had been seen to approach the border of the stream. Neglecting Rachel—unmindful of his promise—insensible of his passion — with a long and lighted

pine-branch, he flew to the rapid torrent.

The young Levites, friends of the unhappy Eleazar, followed in like manner. They passed through all the bye-paths—crossed the rugged rocks, and spread themselves among the mountains with incessant cry. Sadoc, Abdias, and Rachel remained on the hither side—they heard their mournful exclamations and the vain echo—the gloom of night and the errant lights gleaming through the ambient obscurity, added to the awful and icy terror which took possession of their souls.

Thus passed the night, and Eleazar was not found. Long after the break

of day, Naphtali, with disordered hair, a ghastly paleness in his countenance, his feet lacerated and bleeding—returned to Sadoc. In mournful silence he pressed his hand—regardless of Rachel. He stood mute and motionless —just touched with his lips the refreshment that was offered to him, and passed it to his companions; then throwing around him a wolf's skin, he took his bow and fatal arrows, and was again departing, when an old shepherd presented himself, bearing in his hand a garment, soiled with sand and slime. Naphtali started back with an ejaculation of alarm, and the old shepherd addressing himself to Sadoc, "Do you recollect," said he, "the dress worn by your son?" and placed at his feet the

tiara of Eleazar, and the purple robe! —Sadoc saw them, and fell into the arms of Abdias.—Naphtali threw himself on the well-known mantle, crying, "Oh, my brother!"—and starting up, maddened by grief, he broke his bow, his quiver, and tore in shreds his tunic; then rushing forwards to the old shepherd, "Tell me," said he, in the wild accent of despair, "where—when did you find these things?"—"This morning at the break of day," replied the affrighted old man, "near that rugged rock from whence the waters of the torrent fall—the tiara was at the edge, the mantle in the midst of the rapid waves."

Naphtali looked at the old shep-

herd, and made a sign to him to withdraw.

The young Levites hastened round the dejected Naphtali, but he declined their attendance, and desired to be alone. Sighing, they withdrew, and announced through Shiloh the mournful news of Eleazar's death.

Great was the lamentation of the people for the loss of this object of their love—they covered their heads with ashes, and imposed on themselves ten days of mourning. All Israel mourned the son of Israel's benefactor. —Sadoc restored to sense by the attentions of Rachel, heard the general voice of lamentation—he fell on his

knees — raised his hands, and with feeble voice exclaimed, "Alas! my Eleazar!"—Naphtali ran to him, and falling on the old man's bosom endeavoured to console him—but his voice failed in all but the joint invocation of his brother's name!

## CANTO IV.

SEVENTY days had elapsed.—Sadoc, by the course of nature, on the brink of the grave, in humble hope, had long awaited death—in him life languished, but the affection of Naphtali, and the attentions of Rachel, had renewed its course.

Abdias, now his constant companion, would often talk with him of Eleazar, whom both called their son,—and by

that common name, rendered their mutual condolence more effective of its end.

Rachel, in the dress of sorrow, her head still covered with the mourning veil, divided her attentions to the comfort of them both—while Naphtali, abandoned to regret, or diffident of approaching Rachel, passed whole days, sitting at the foot of the fig-tree—where he had raised a tomb of turf—and, under a polished stone, had deposited all that remained with him of his brother!—this humble cenotaph amused his grief—thither he repaired at the break of day—there seemed to suffer less, in the idea that he was nearer him he mourned.

In the meanwhile Sadoc, the religious observer of the precepts of Moses, seeing the period of Rachel's mourning terminated, summoned Naphtali.—

"My son," said he, "you know the law of Moses—it ordains that you take to you as a wife your brother's widow—the dear name of Eleazar should not be lost in Israel—it is for your children to revive it."

Naphtali heard and blushed.—His heart, agitated by opposing sentiments, reproved him for the joy he felt—fraternal piety seemed offended by the happiness his duty would impose on him.

"Oh, my father," he replied, "I have long loved Rachel—in obeying the law, I but gratify a most ardent wish—but Eleazar is no more!—dare I be happy!—Pardon this language, Rachel—I ask pardon of ye all, while I stipulate that, on the consummation of our marriage, a retirement, perpetual and recluse, may cherish in me the recollection of his worth, and augment, if possible, my just tribute of sorrow to his memory."

"My son," interrupted Sadoc, "I have anticipated your desires—and have announced to the elders of the people my intention to resign into their hands the censer and the ephod. My feeble

arms can no longer immolate the holy victims—my mind, depressed by age and sorrow, is no longer capable of duly celebrating the praises of the Eternal. Had my Eleazar lived! — my strength might still have sufficed.—The elders would have chosen you—but I have declined for you the honour.—I had already read your heart—and knew its need of solitude.—Yes, Naphtali, let us seclude ourselves—let us retire from the world—the unhappy are best together—Abdias, Rachel, and I, can love and sympathize with you."

He then took the hand of Rachel and joining it with that of his son, declared according to the law, that the fruits of their marriage should inherit

the name and rights of Eleazar—and implored the God of Jacob to bless this new alliance, which rendered him a second time the father of Rachel.

Naphtali and Rachel heard—and, scarcely venturing, interchanged a look of sorrow, piety, and timid love.

Thenceforth, Naphtali, Rachel, Sadoc, and Abdias, became strangers to the world—considered themselves as alone upon the earth—and lived but in the relative duties of piety, family friendship and affection; and in the exercise of their rural labours.

Abdias, with the price of his house and flocks at Luza, enlarged the field

of Sadoc, and planted there the vine and olive-tree; the field fed the family, and its superfluity the poor—the poor, whom it was their duty to remember, were all of mankind, whom they had not forgotten.

Naphtali arose with the first blush of day to open the fertile bosom of the earth, and sow the nutritious seed—to prune the vine — support its tender shoots—or cultivate the olive. And when the sun, in his meridian power, inflamed the wide horizon, and returned him to his peaceful home, Rachel would come forth to meet him—her cheerful aspect beaming with correspondent influence on her happy spouse. Then hand in hand, advancing to the

table where the old men sat, Naphtali would receive the compensation of his labours in their welcome. The diligent Rachel prepared their simple fare, of which together they partook, with love and friendship for its zest—and often was the feast prolonged by the harmony of its consequent society. Then to the field all went. to share its labours—and when the sun was hidden in the western clouds, Rachel with Naphtali, proceeded to his brother's tomb—with bended knee, and head reclined upon the monumental stone, would join him in silent meditation—or if they sometimes spoke—it was always of Eleazar; to recount his actions or repeat his words; never did other conversation e'er profane this hallowed

spot—never there did Naphtali or Rachel presume by word or action to express their union, or pronounce their spousal name.

Thus passed the hours away.

Twelve times had the moon renewed her light—and Rachel was the mother of a son. They named him Eleazar—the very name seemed to enhance his parents' love—though all sufficient to obtain it, was the beauty of his mind and person—for never were the presages of excellence more early indicated than in the young and happy Eleazar.

At scarcely four years old, he comprehended and retained whatever Sa-

doc taught him. Never, but with reluctance, would the old man quit him. —With heart o'erflowing with affection, he would snatch him from the arms of Rachel, to fondle him in his own—would lead him to the field—raise him above his head to pluck with his little hands the tempting fruit—invent amusements and share in his delight. The venerable pontiff, whose white beard flowed upon his aged breast, would be seen sporting on the grass with the infant Eleazar—old Abdias would join them in their sports, and Rachel viewing them as she spun the thread to weave her father's garment, would drop her spindle to wipe away the tears of joy that mingled with her smiles.

The infant's strength increasing with his years, demanded of the good old Sadoc a care more cautious, and a severer eye—for he had insisted on the exclusive charge of his instruction. He taught him first to read the holy law—and in his yet pure and docile mind instilled the precepts of the Eternal. He already knew the commandments delivered to Moses—and could recite the miracles God enabled him to perform for the delivery of his people from the hands of the Egyptians.

Such was his strength of memory and mind, that Sadoc wondered and his mother wept.

On the return of Naphtali from the

labours of the field, Eleazar sitting on the knee of his master, grandsire, and friend, would repeat to his astonished father, how Joseph, sold by his brethren, afterwards fed and forgave them —while the old man listening and pronouncing, in a low voice, each word he uttered—fancied himself the pupil of his beautiful and affecting story—the distress of Jacob deprived of his beloved Benjamin, moved him even to tears, and he would press his little Eleazar still closer to his bosom—while Naphtali, glancing at Rachel a look of sorrow, as often as it escaped the infant's mouth, evinced his interest in the name of *brother!*

Nine years were already past—and

the sports of Eleazar claimed a wider range. Often and alone, with bow and arrows, like his father animated and adroit, he would course adown the rapid torrent's length, the heron and the sea-eagle—nor was it long ere he would cross the waters—and climb the mountain's top in search of the young swift-footed fawn.—Rachel and Sadoc would complain of these long and solitary excursions, while Naphtali, more indulgent, smiled—pleased to see his courage so far exceed his strength, his tacit indications cherished in his son his innate ardour for the chase.

This ardour seemed daily to increase. No sooner was dinner ended, than Eleazar, armed with his bow, would disap-

pear till night—then, returning loaded with dates fresh plucked, or wood-pigeons—the fruit he would present to Rachel, or the birds to Sadoc—while both would wonder how his yet infant strength enabled him to climb the lofty palm-trees, and in the language of parental apprehension chide him for his long absence and incautious risk. But soon would Eleazar, whose tongue Nature had already taught persuasion, banish their fears, restore their confidence, and, for his future liberty—he knew that if he kissed them, they'd be kind.

One day, Eleazar, contrary to his usual custom, departed at its earliest dawn—the hour of evening sacrifice had passed, and he had not returned.

Rachel, in tears, had sent Naphtali to seek him in the environs of the stream; herself, having coursed its border, was sitting under the fig-tree, when suddenly she perceived him—his countenance was pale—his eyes were filled with tears.

"Oh, my child!" cried Rachel, "what has happened?—tell me quickly."

"Ah, mother," he replied, "my grief draws from me a secret, which I had sworn never to reveal.—It is to you alone, that I confide it—you will keep it—I am sure you will—and you will help my friend."

At these words, Rachel still more surprised, promised him all that he required—and gently wiping away his tears, kissed him, and listened to his story.

" I will now tell you," said Eleazar, " why I have so often quitted you—when you have heard me, I am sure you will forgive me.

" Last month, I, one day, ventured to cross the stream—I descended the opposite bank—and saw, sitting under a rock, a poor man cloathed in rags. His hair hung over his face—his beard descended to his half-naked breast—his face was pale—and he seemed suf-

fering under pain and sickness. I was not frightened—on the contrary, I felt pity for him. I had some fruit with me, that I had brought from table, and I went and offered it to him.

" 'My child, said he, ' I have no need of what your goodness offers—but I should like to know more of so kind a friend—what is your name?—who are thy happy parents?' 'I am Eleazar,' said I; 'Sadoc, the old pontiff of Israel, is my grandfather—my mother's name is Rachel—my father's Naphtali—and in pitying the poor, I do but obey their precepts.'

" I had scarcely said these words, when the man came to me—took me in

his arms—raised me up—and pressed me to his bosom. He said nothing—but he sighed—and I felt his tears run down upon my cheeks. 'Be not surprised,' said he, 'at this proof of my affection—I owe my life to Sadoc—and I could not see his grandson unmoved—let it not offend you. He then put on a smile—but I soon perceived his countenance was not accustomed to it. I took him by the hand. 'Come with me,' said I, 'I will conduct you to Sadoc—I am by Sadoc always most caressed, when I bring the poor to receive his bounty.' 'No,' said he (and he kissed me)—'I am banished from Shiloh for an involuntary crime!—I should be lost, if I appeared there—and now, my child, you are sensible of my confidence

—my life is in your hands. Should you discover to any one that I am concealed in this mountain—that you have seen me here—they would come and snatch me hence, and deliver me to the most excruciating torments." I trembled at his words—I promised to keep the secret—and return to him again.

"The next day I went—he awaited me in the same place—and, encouraged by my punctuality, confided in my promises, and conducted me to his retreat. It is a cave not far hence, hidden among the rocks.—I saw nothing in it but some branches of the date tree.—The dates he fed on—and of the branches he made his bed!

" 'Here is my house,' said he, 'it has nothing inviting in it; but if you would sometimes visit me, you would make me happy. This morning, at the break of day, I sought, and fortunately took, these two live wood-pigeons; and as birds are your delight, it shall be my business to obtain them for you.—I am an unskilful fowler, but the desire of pleasing you will supply ali deficiences.' Then in a cage of rushes he presented me two wood-pigeons—these I brought home—and all you have received have been his gifts to me. In my absence his time was occupied in laying snares for doves, and seeking the finest fruits. Then, with his presents by his side, and sitting at the entrance of the cave, he

would await my coming. The joy these presents caused me, seemed reflected in his eyes—he would embrace me—place me nigh him—sometimes on his knees—and then we talked together. He would, talk of you—my father—and my grandfather. He seemed interested in your happiness, and would make me repeat all that you had said. These conversations charmed me—I loved to visit one so tender and so kind; and I would say to myself—perhaps I am the only one in the world who can console him—I must see him often.

" This morning I went early to his cave, for he was yesterday unwell—and secretly in a vase I took some milk,

hoping it would do him good—but since yesterday, his illness is become more serious. I found him on his bed —he took the milk I brought—pressed my hand—and thanked me; but I saw it was with difficulty that he strove to hide his sufferings. I knew not how to leave him—and I should have been there still—but the idea struck me that you might help him.—Oh, come, come with me—it may be you would save his life."

Thus spake Eleazar—and Rachel, enraptured, kissed him.—"Amiable child," said she, "how good and sensible is thy young heart—how happy I—thy mother!—yes, my child, I will follow you—let us not lose an instant."

She immediately arose, and hastened home.—Naphtali had just returned from seeking his little son. Rachel informed him of all that she had heard, and Naphtali determined to accompany them to the cave. He took with him oil and wine—Rachel other provisions—and, conducted by Eleazar, they advanced toward the mountain.

Eleazar hastened their steps. At the entrance of the cave, the child requested they would stop—and entering alone, he said to the wretched recluse. "Oh, my friend, forgive me—for I have revealed your secret—but it was in the hope of being useful to you—be not alarmed—I have

brought to you my father and my mother."

"What, my child," cried the dying man, half rising from his bed—"Naphtali!—Rachel!—may I again embrace you!—Oh, heaven!—give me strength."

At these words, Naphtali, recognising the well known voice, flew into the cavern—fell — and embraced his brother.—"It is he!—It is Eleazar!"

Rachel saw again her former husband.—Mute—and to him forbidden—she supported Naphtali, whose head remained sunk upon his brother's bosom--while the child, astonished, viewed them with tearful eyes.

The dying Eleazar, embracing with one arm his brother, extended the other to Rachel, and looking at the child, he bid him not to weep.

When to the turbulence of transport, a more grateful tranquillity had succeeded — Eleazar with enfeebled voice, reclining on his brother, addressed him in these words:—

"Oh, Naphtali!—my time is short! —let me avail myself of these the last moments in which I may still call you brother—disturb not the sacred joy I feel in speaking to you once more—be assured my Naphtali, your Eleazar dies much happier than he has lived!

"On the day of my marriage, I saw you, at the fig-tree, return to Rachel the veil you carried in your bosom.—That word said all—I did what you would have done! The law ordained that you should become the husband of my widow, and I left my garments on the border of the stream, that my death might be believed—I saw the possibility of your happiness—and it enabled me to live.

"I set out—undetermined in my course—quitted Canaan—and reached the land of Emath. To forget Rachel was my hope—but I found it vain.—To forget Rachel and Naphtali was impossible to Eleazar—and I found myself in the world, abandoned and

alone—like a grape upon the branch, forgotten in the gathering!

"After nine years of suffering, and suffering in vain, which gave me neither death, nor the oblivion which I sought, I returned again to Shiloh—in these mountains I concealed myself by day, and at night I strayed around your dwelling, dreading to be perceived—but burning with desire to see you,

"At length, one evening, sitting behind a rock just opposite the wild-fig-tree, I saw you, Naphtali, leading Rachel by the hand. Oh, Naphtali!—how can I describe the vehemence of my desire to run and embrace you?—

I saw ye kneel at the tomb—I saw your tears fall, when ye pronounced the name of Eleazar! Oh, Naphtali! —Oh, my Rachel!—that single moment repayed me for nine years of sorrow.—'They love me still,' I cried, —'dare I pronounce me wretched.'

"From that moment I determined here to fix my residence. I sought and found this grot. I eat of the fruits of the date-tree — and I drank of the stream. I saw you every evening. I reproached myself with your tears—yet, reproaching, I enjoyed them—I wished you comforted—but should have been less pleased to have seen you so.

"Heaven soon sent a still greater

blessing—in the meeting of your child. I gained him by my gifts, my attentions and my friendship. How many are the happy hours I owe to him! How great the transports of my soul, when, holding him on my knees, in silent contemplation, I have said to myself—' Here is the child of Naphtali and Rachel—in him live united, my wife and brother!' I pressed him to my bosom—and imagined I embraced you both—he returned my embraces—and I fancied myself in your arms!

" This happiness is past—like the fleet hours of a morning!—Oh, Naphtali!—I am dying!—But it is the will of heaven!—and let its will be done! —Oh, that I might once more embrace

my good and virtuous father!—Tell him....tell him....but, no—his wounds are healed—let them not bleed afresh—let him not mourn anew, the son he has so long deplored!—Come nearer, Naphtali—Rachel—and you my Eleazar—my son—my latest friend!—give me your hands—join them—that, united, I may press them to my heart.—Alas!—it beats no longer!—but it loves you still!—Adieu!—Adieu!—be comforted—be happy—and let me live in your remembrance!"

FINIS.

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